

## REMARKS

The last Office Action of March 10, 2010 has been carefully considered. Reconsideration of the instant application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 2-17, 19-27 are pending in the application. Claim 24 has been amended. No claims have been canceled or added. No amendment to the specification has been made. No fee is due.

### CLAIM REJECTIONS - 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 2-17, 19-25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Spitzer et al., of record, in view of Sivilotti et al., of record, and further in view of U.S. Pat. No. 4,588,021 to Bergeron et al.

The rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) is respectfully traversed in view of the amendments to independent claim 24 and the following remarks.

Applicant has amended sole independent claim 24 by clarifying the conditioning step and in particular setting forth that the conditioning of the top side of the conveyor band is implemented by a single step process, e.g. by any of the processes recited in dependent claims 26 and 27. Support for the changes to claim 24 can be found, for example, in paragraphs [0024] and [0025] of the instant specification.

The Bergeron reference which the Examiner now combined with the Spitzer et al. and Sivilotti references describes a belt conditioning process, involving a roughening of the belt surface by grit-blasting (col. 4, ll. 12-13) **and** subsequently applying a one-coat fusion-bonded matrix protective insulative coating directly to the grit-blasted roughened belt surface (col. 4, ll. 57-59) in order to create a desired porosity. In other words, Bergeron describes a two-step process to condition the belt surface and in particular is desirous to provide the required porosity. As noted, for example, in col. 5, ll. 36-38, Bergeron underlines the fact that the application of

thermal spraying is suitable in contravention to general knowledge in order to realize the desired porosity. In other words, Bergeron focuses on the implementation of porosity, using grit-blasting as a preliminary treatment step and thermal spraying as a second step, whereas the present invention focuses on surface structuring, using grit-blasting as the only treatment step to realize the desired result.

For the reasons set forth above, it is applicant's contention that neither Spitzer et al., nor Sivilotti et al., nor Bergeron, taken alone or in any combination thereof, teaches or suggests the features of the present invention, as recited in independent claim 24.

As for the rejection of the dependent claims, these claims depend on claim 24, share its presumably allowable features, and therefore it is respectfully submitted that these claims should also be allowed.

Withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is thus respectfully requested.

## **CITED REFERENCES**

Applicant has also carefully scrutinized the further cited prior art and finds it without any relevance to the claims on file. It is thus felt that no specific discussion thereof is necessary.

## **CONCLUSION**

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is considered patentably differentiated over the prior art of record and believed to be in immediate conditions for allowance.

Reconsideration and allowance of the present application are thus respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner consider necessary or desirable any formal changes anywhere in the specification, claims and/or drawing, then it is respectfully requested

that such changes be made by Examiner's Amendment, if the Examiner feels this would facilitate passage of the case to issuance. If the Examiner feels that it might be helpful in advancing this case by calling the undersigned, applicant would greatly appreciate such a telephone interview.

Respectfully submitted,

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